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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LISBON 001655

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [PGOV](#) [PO](#) [YI](#) [KV](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL POLDIR: CONCERN ON IRAN, WAIT ON KOSOVO

REF: A. STATE 69691  
[1](#)B. STATE 64530

Classified By: AMBASSADOR STEPHENSON, REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Summary. While just absorbing his portfolios, new MFA Political Director Nuno Brito relayed his optimism for a negotiated suspension of Iranian uranium enrichment. Brito also doubted Portugal would recognize Kosovo before September, but would maintain its support for NATO and EU missions there. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Ambassador Stephenson called on Portuguese MFA Political Director Ambassador Nuno Brito July 10 -- on Brito's third day in office -- to discuss recent developments with Iran and Kosovo.

Iran: Some hope only  
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[1](#)3. (C/NF) Brito told us that he believed an "understanding" on Iran's suspension of uranium enrichment was within reach, although he noted that Iran had not yet formally responded to the P5 1 offer.

[1](#)4. (C/NF) Brito opined that Europe's primary concern regarding Iran was an additional spike in oil prices that would result from a potential Israeli intervention. Brito recounted the statements of Iranian parliamentarian Allaeddin Boroodjerdi who stated during a visit to the Portuguese parliament this week that recent missile tests were a specific message to Israel. Brito said that while it was fine to keep Iran off-balance, Israel should temper its actions.

[1](#)5. (C/NF) Brito also said he was struck by Boroodjerdi's citation of cooperation with the U.S. on counterterrorism in Iraq as an example of Iran's willingness to cooperate with the west.

Kosovo: Don't hold your breath  
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[1](#)6. (C/NF) Portugal's failure to recognize Kosovo yet is not a refusal to recognize Kosovo according to Brito, who suggested that he does not now, however, expect any announcement before September. Acknowledging that the many obstacles that Portuguese representatives had previously cited -- Spanish, Russian, and Serbian elections -- had all passed, Brito said only that these steps had been necessary, but not sufficient conditions. Brito denied that differing interpretations of UNSC 1244 were the basis for Portugal's delay, noting that Kosovo recognition was a political issue rather than a legal issue.

[1](#)7. (U) Brito continued that Portugal is active in bringing Serbia closer to the European Union. Nonetheless, Portugal maintains its commitment to both the NATO mission and the nascent EULEX justice mission in Kosovo.

Bio notes

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¶8. (U) Brito spent 11 years in the U.S., serving at Portugal's missions in New York and Washington. He said he visited 41 states during that time and professed a deep admiration for our country. Professionally, Brito was involved with the negotiations of the U.S.-Portugal Agreement on Cooperation and Defense (ACD), signed in 1995. Brito subsequently took the lead on the ACD's subordinate Labor Agreement, which governs employment practices for the U.S. Air Force's operations at Lajes Air Base in the Azores. As Director General of European Affairs for the last two years, Brito was directly responsible for policy coordination during Portugal's recent EU presidency.

Comment

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¶9. (C/NF) Brito cheerfully admitted that, in his few days in office, he had not mastered many of his portfolios, including the one on Iran. His comments on the subject were based almost entirely on attending the parliamentary meeting where Boroodjerdi spoke. Brito specifically asked that Ambassador Stephenson be candid with him and Ambassador Stephenson obliged, particularly on Kosovo. The Ambassador made it very clear we were both perplexed and frustrated that Portugal, having played an important role in focusing EU attention on Kosovo during their EU presidency, was now one of only seven members (five of whom have some similar internal ethnic issues) not to have recognized. We expect a good relationship with Brito, who is known for his professionalism. Unlike what we frequently encountered with Vasco Bramao Ramos, Brito's predecessor, there will be little free-lancing on his watch.

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STEPHENSON